

# The Council of Nicaea, by Caroline Symcox

A Big Finish Productions Dr Who Audio Drama, released July 2005

## [Part One]

MAN: Please. Please, I beg you. I've done nothing wrong.

JULIUS: Nothing wrong? You think we'd be here if you'd done nothing wrong?

MAN: I only said...

JULIUS: Yes, you said. You couldn't keep your mouth shut, could you?

MAN: Oh please.

JULIUS: You go stirring up trouble, turning people against the Lord's own truth. You think we'd let that go?

MAN: I was defending the Lord (slap, gasp)

JULIUS: I don't think you were, do you?

MAN: I just...

JULIUS: In Nicaea, just at the moment, you want to be careful what you say, and who you say it to. You just weren't careful enough. Too late for you to learn, but I think your heretic friends will get the message.

MAN: Please, Julius, I won't do it again. I promise.

JULIUS: You won't.

(Gurgling noise to appreciation of crowd.)

(Nocturnal insects. The Tardis materialises. Tardis door opens.)

PERI: It's pitch dark, Doctor. How do you know this is the right place?

DOCTOR: Have a little faith, Peri. The Tardis may sometimes take us a little off course, but she hardly ever lies about it. We're exactly where we planned to be. Nicaea, the year 325, a few days before the Council is set to begin.

ERIMEM: Mmm, it is good to be back on Earth. It may sound strange, but this place feels familiar. The warmth of the air, the smells...

DOCTOR: I'm not surprised, Erimem. We're a few thousand years and six hundred or so miles away from Egypt, but life on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean doesn't change much. Hmm, the air is still warm. Can't be too long after dark. Plenty of time to find ourselves a place to stay.

PERI: Couldn't we just stay in the Tardis for the night? I bet it's a lot cheaper, and more comfortable. Besides, this is the 4<sup>th</sup> century. I don't fancy waking up with company, Doctor, of the six-legged biting variety.

DOCTOR: Nonsense. You want the full experience, don't you? This is a thoroughly civilised part of the Roman Empire. Those Romans knew how to live comfortably. Besides, it wouldn't be a good idea to draw attention to the Tardis. Best to leave the old girl well alone until it's time to go. Don't worry, Peri. We've slept in stranger places.

(Tardis door closes.)

PERI: Yeah, but not by choice.

ERIMEM: Come on, Peri. It will be fun. I cannot wait to see the people of this time. I wonder how like they are to my people? In all our travels, this must be the nearest we have come to the Egypt that I left behind.

DOCTOR: I'm sure there'll be plenty that's familiar to you. For a start, there are quite a few Egyptians here for the Council. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Alexandria is one of the largest centres of Christian theology. Many of its greatest minds will have travelled to Nicaea to be heard in the Council's discussions.

ERIMEM: My own people will be here. Wonderful.

DOCTOR: But if we want to hear those discussions, we have some work to do. We'll need to make friends quickly if we're going to get an invitation in time.

PERI: Are you telling me we've come all this way and you don't even have an invitation?

DOCTOR: It's never caused problems before.

PERI: Oh, you're impossible, Doctor. Come on, then. If I have bug bites at the end of this, I'm blaming you.

CONSTANTINE: Will they give me no peace? As if I don't have enough to think about.

FAUSTA: Another letter, Constantine? Who is it this time?

CONSTANTINE: Can't you guess?

FAUSTA: Not Athanasius again.

CONSTANTINE: Ah Fausta, my dear, for once the good Lord has kept me from that fate. No, this is from Alexander, Athanasius's superior.

FAUSTA: Oh, of course. Alexander of Alexandria. For once, an easy one to remember.

CONSTANTINE: He is that. One of the loudest voices in this endless Church argument. He cares not that if the argument continues and the Church is torn apart it will take the whole Empire with it. And his clerk, the wretched Athanasius, is even worse. I'm not sure who encourages whom in that relationship.

FAUSTA: Oh, you do your best, my husband. It takes a great man to be as patient with his people as you

have been.

CONSTANTINE: My best? Despite my best efforts, this man will not be silenced. Even his responsibility as a Bishop, his desire to keep the Church as one, does not persuade him to listen to my wishes. Even now, at this late hour, on the very eve of the Council, he seeks to influence me. He sends me letters, tries to persuade me to his side.

FAUSTA: If not his side, Constantine, whose?

CONSTANTINE: I am on no-one's side! Their bickering threatens to undo all I've worked for. I don't care who wins or loses, but I swear to you, when this Council is over, so is the argument. Even if I have to threaten them, exile them, I will have an end to this.

FAUSTA: You would really send in troops?

CONSTANTINE: My dear, you and I have fought wars to get this far. If I have to spill a little more blood to hold the Empire together, so be it.

DOCTOR: Ah, there we go. You see, I told you there would still be people around.

CLEMENT: Sorry, sir. Stall's closed. Just on my way home.

DOCTOR: We're not here to shop. My friends and I were wondering if you could direct us to a decent inn.

CLEMENT: An inn? There's one not too bad just up the way. You're here for the Council, then.

DOCTOR: That's right. Just arrived from

CLEMENT: Alexandria, right?

DOCTOR: Spot on. How did you know?

CLEMENT: Lucky guess. I dunno where you were born, friend, but I'd have to be blind not to recognise the girl there as Egyptian. And if you're up from Egypt, then most likely from Alexandria. After all, that's where it's all happening, isn't it?

ERIMEM: Where all what's happening?

CLEMENT: Well, the row about our Lord's being created or not, of course. Everyone's calling everyone else heretics. Here, friend, you didn't drag her all this way with her not knowing why she's here, did you?

PERI: Well, wouldn't be the first time.

DOCTOR: Peri.

CLEMENT: Still, Emperor Constantine and his Council are looking to sort all that out. Though if he manages it without blood being spilt, I'll be surprised.

DOCTOR: I'm sorry, I'd love to chat all night, but we really ought to be on our way. Were you saying you knew of a good inn?

CLEMENT: You'll be wanting to stay near your friends. Best be near folk you can trust if trouble breaks out, eh?

PERI: Trouble?

CLEMENT: Just follow the street straight down for a bit, then take the second road on your left. There's an inn down there run by a fellow called Gregory. Tell him Clement sent you.

DOCTOR: Most kind of you, Clement. Come on then, you two.

CLEMENT: Safe journey to you.

PERI: Trouble, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Hmm?

ERIMEM: The stall holder mentioned trouble.

PERI: And going on past experience, if there's trouble, it'll be for us.

DOCTOR: Oh, don't worry, Peri. I'm sure he was exaggerating. Just trying to make the conversation a little more exciting, that's all.

ERIMEM: He seemed to know what he was talking about.

PERI: He did, didn't he. How come he knew so much?

DOCTOR: In this time, theology is something of a spectator sport. Everyone down to the average man on the street knew the theological arguments of the day, and held a strong opinion on it. Religion is very important to them.

ERIMEM: As it was to my people, but I do not think that the people of my Egypt ever discussed the views of the priests in the streets. They obeyed. They did not debate. Did the priests of this religion listen to the views of the ordinary people?

DOCTOR: I'm sure they'd like to think they did, but no, Erimem, the priests in this time are more concerned with their own arguments than trying to please the general public.

ERIMEM: That seems foolish. If the people are involved in such discussions, and yet their views are not listened to, they will become restless.

PERI: Great. Trouble.

DOCTOR: Really, Peri. Must you be so pessimistic?

(Distant crowd noises.)

DOCTOR: Ah.

PERI: You were saying, Doctor?

DOCTOR: And here I was just hoping to get to the inn and have a good night's sleep. Time to find another route, I think. A mob like that won't be interested in us. I'm sure they've got bigger fish to fry. Marvellous.

PERI: Looks like we've got some pretty big fish right behind us, Doctor.

ERIMEM: We're trapped.

DOCTOR: It does rather look that way

ATHANASIUS: Has it begun?

JULIUS: They're marching now. Obviously last night's incitement worked. They're a fully-formed mob now.

ATHANASIUS: Good work, Julius. Do you know where they're going?

JULIUS: I'm afraid I don't.

ATHANASIUS: It doesn't matter. They're bound to run into our loyal supporters sooner or later..

JULIUS: And then the fun starts. Nothing like blood in the streets to get Constantine's attention.

ATHANASIUS: Blood? Little enough of that. Constantine's guards will have been sent out at the first sign of trouble. He doesn't want riots the night before the Council starts, which is why we organise them, of course. As long as Constantine thinks Arius' followers are troublemakers, the better for us. We don't need to hurt people to achieve the chaos we need.

JULIUS: But if a few people die, well then

ATHANASIUS: It's the Lord's will. His truth must be protected at all costs, as we're instructed. If some are taken early to his service, then that is what the Lord desires. You know that nothing can happen on this Earth without his will and knowledge, don't you? His truth is the only thing that matters.

DOCTOR: Just listen to me for a second. Violence won't solve anything! Please, put your weapons down! We can talk about this. I'm afraid they don't want to talk. The moment a gap opens up, run. Don't wait for me, just get out of here and go back to the Tardis. I'll see you there.

ERIMEM: We will not leave you, Doctor.

DOCTOR: For once, Erimem, just do as I say. Besides, you may be able to fight, but would you let Peri stay here to get hurt?

ERIMEM: That is unfair.

DOCTOR: Just keep Peri safe for me. Now, run!

ERIMEM: Come on, Peri.

PERI: Oh, no.

ERIMEM: Quickly, Peri.

PERI: I'm coming as quick as I can. Erimem, look out!

(Erimem screams.)

PERI: No! Oh, God. Please be all right. Come on, get up, Erimem, please.

(Erimem groans.)

ARIUS: Quickly, come with me. I'll carry your friend.

PERI: Who are you?

ARIUS: You have to get out of this fighting. I'll take you somewhere safe.

PERI: How do I know I can trust you?

ARIUS: You don't. You'll just have to have faith.

PERI: Do I have a choice?

ARIUS: Let's get out of here.

ERIMEM: Where have you taken us? Who are you?

PERI: Thank goodness you're all right, Erimem. This man rescued you - well, us - from the crowd. Someone hit you.

ERIMEM: But who is he?

ARIUS: My name is not important.

PERI: Well, listen here, mister. How can we even begin to trust you when you don't tell us your name?

ARIUS: Very well. My name is Arius.

ERIMEM: What were you doing in the riot? Were you with one of those groups?

ARIUS: Not as such. Do you mean you don't know who I am?

PERI: Are we supposed to know every strange man we meet? Besides, we've only just arrived from

ERIMEM: From Thebes.

PERI: Yes. From Thebes.

ARIUS: Even down there I would have thought... not that it matters. I am Presbyter of the Church District of Baucalis in Alexandria. It's my fault those people were fighting one another.

PERI: Your fault?

ARIUS: The argument between the Bishop of Alexandria and myself is what is tearing the Church apart.

PERI: Okay. So the Emperor's called this Council to settle the argument, right?

ARIUS: That is Constantine's wish, yet everyone takes sides, even the people on the streets. Settling the argument will not be as easy as he thinks.

PERI: So he's called you here to argue your side of things?

ARIUS: Of course not. Where have you been, girl?

PERI: Let's just say I've not heard much local news recently.

ARIUS: A Presbyterian would never be allowed to speak at such a Council. You'd have to be a Bishop if you were to have any voice in such a gathering. But I, not only am I a mere Presbyterian, I have been deposed for two years now.

PERI: Deposed meaning?

ARIUS: The Egyptian Synod censored me I have been disgraced ever since. Alexander's doing, to spite those who support the truth of my words.

ERIMEM: What argument could be so serious that it should cause so much harm?

ARIUS: It is about the nature of Our Lord. I am a student of the works of Origen, a holy father of the Church. From his works, and from studying Holy Scripture, I have learned that God must be understood as absolutely unique, and absolutely transcendent. God alone is eternal, ingenerate, sovereign.

PERI: Okay. That doesn't sound very radical to me.

ARIUS: Radical? Of course it's not radical. It is entirely in keeping with Origen's teachings. It is orthodox.

PERI: So what's the problem?

ARIUS: Since God is indivisible and unique, it follows that the being of the Godhead cannot be shared or communicated. Do you see?

PERI: God can't be split up. Okay, I think I'm with you.

ARIUS: So whatever else exists must have come into existence by an act of creation on God's part. And that must include the Christ.

PERI: I take it your Bishop doesn't agree?

ARIUS: He and his clerk Athanasius say this takes away the divinity of Christ, making him unable to truly save us.

PERI: That's it? That's what this whole huge argument is about?

ARIUS: Yes.

ERIMEM: Do not laugh, Peri. Can you not see how serious this is?

PERI: I'm sorry, Arius, really I am, but it just seems such a small thing to argue about. I mean, don't you all believe that Jesus saved you anyway? Does it really matter what exactly he was made of?

ERIMEM: I do not follow the intricacies of the argument, nor do I understand why the difference between the two sides is so important, but I can see the consequences, Peri. This argument caused the riot. It has seen Arius cast from his post, and it is serious enough that the Emperor himself has called a Council to resolve it.

ARIUS: It is serious enough to drive people to murder.

PERI: Murder?

ARIUS: Only last night one of my supporters was killed. He was not the first.

PERI: Oh, at least now the Emperor's on the case things will be sorted.

ARIUS: You do not know our Emperor very well, I'm afraid. He will end things, yes, but not as we might like. He will do anything to get the outcome he desires, be it punishments, executions, war.

ERIMEM: He does desire to end this argument though, does he not? As any good ruler would, he is working to bring peace?

ARIUS: Maybe so, but he does not care how he does it. He will watch how the Council proceeds, and at the end he will endorse one argument. If my beliefs are judged heretical, then my supporters will be ruthlessly suppressed. I will be exiled, perhaps even killed. And all this without being able to speak in my defence. That is why I am here. If the Council does not hear my voice, then the people will, and so I speak to them, hoping in turn that they will speak for me. I can only hope that Constantine hears them as clearly as he hears the Bishops.

(Fighting continues.)

DOCTOR: Just... look... please, stop. Can't you just talk? Well, no, I suppose we can't.

MAN: Run! The legionaries are here!

GAIUS: All right. Don't make this harder than it has to be.

DOCTOR: I assure I've nothing to do with this. Frankly, I'm glad to be rescued.

GAIUS: Innocent bystander, eh? We'll see. You're coming back to the cells with us. The Emperor takes a very dim view of rioters.

DOCTOR: I wasn't actually fighting in there, you know, Centurion. I just seemed to be getting in the way.

GAIUS: It'll all come out in the interrogation. Right, let's get them back. I have a feeling it's going to be a long night.

ERIMEM: If the Council judges you a heretic, what will you do, Arius?

ARIUS: I will not abandon my beliefs. I will continue to teach what I have always taught, and I trust my followers will always stay with me..

ERIMEM: And the Emperor will hunt you down.

ARIUS: He is merciless. All he cares about is the unity of his Empire. He had his own brother-in-law killed

only a year or so ago, and he has fought bloody wars to be the sole Emperor. Even his own father was content with being one of four, but that was never good enough for Constantine.

ERIMEM: A tyrant.

ARIUS: He crushes those who oppose him.

ERIMEM: Do I misunderstand? I thought he believed as you do. I thought he was a Christian.

ARIUS: So he says, and he has ceased the persecutions of the Christians in the Empire.

ERIMEM: But are Christians not supposed to shun power, to serve their fellow man, to be patient and gentle? This is what I was taught of Christianity.

ARIUS: You were taught? Where did you learn about the faith of the Lord?

ERIMEM: I cannot say. It's not important, Arius.

ARIUS: Well, you are right. The Lord taught us that we should be servants to others, yet Constantine does nothing of the sort. I would not be surprised if his faith were a pretence. Christianity is the mortar he uses to hold together the pieces of his crumbling Empire.

PERI: Oh, fine, fine, fine. Constantine's a bad Emperor. If he judges you a heretic and only if, he's going to crush you and your friends beneath his feet and stamp on you. Whatever. But we can't do anything about it. I mean, the most you can do, Arius, is preach on the streets, lead a couple of demonstration marches, right? It's a sad story, but listen, I mean, Erimem and I, we can't do anything to help, so, sorry. Now you've been very kind and all, but we've got a friend who's still stuck out there, and if you don't mind, we ought to get back and help him.

ERIMEM: Wait, Peri.

PERI: Wait? Erimem, the Doctor was caught up in the middle of fighting. We have to see if he's okay.

ERIMEM: You are right. We should see that the Doctor is safe. But Arius, your words have reached me. I have seen too much oppression, too many cases of tyrants and hypocrites manipulating the people. You believe in your cause, and you deserve a fair hearing. My friends and I are here for a few days during the Council. We will do what we can to help you, this I promise. We are in your debt, and this is the least we can do to repay you. Our friend, the Doctor, is a good man, and I'm sure he will do all he can to see justice done here.

ARIUS: Thank you, Erimem. I will be here at this house for all the time I'm in Nicaea. Please, come and visit when you can. But as for your friend, I'm afraid he will either have escaped or he will be in the Emperor's jail by now. The Imperial troops will not have taken long to disperse the riot.

PERI: Then we must get back to the Tardis. The Doctor's got out of worse jams before, and he'll know to meet us there.

ARIUS: Tardis?

PERI: The place we're staying. If you could show us back to where the riot happened, we can find our own way from there.

ARIUS: It is settled, then. I will send some others with you. The streets are not safe after dark. Not for two women, and especially not when one of them has been hurt. Safe journey, Peri, Erimem, and I hope to see you both soon.

GAIUS: Hail Caesar.

FAUSTA: Why do you disturb the Emperor at this late hour, Gaius?

CONSTANTINE: Peace, Fausta. What is it, Centurion?

GAIUS: We've quelled a riot in the south of the city, Caesar.

CONSTANTINE: The cause?

GAIUS: Religious differences, Caesar.

CONSTANTINE: Will it never stop? The fools dare to do this on the very eve of the Council. Were there any casualties?

GAIUS: Cuts and bruises, a few broken bones. No one killed this time. There don't seem to have been any bystanders caught. Well, that is, er

FAUSTA: Continue, Centurion.

GAIUS: Well, there were no bystanders hurt, but Caesar, we've got a man down in the cells who doesn't seem to belong to either of the groups. Seems to have been caught in the middle of things. He looked to be trying to stop the riot.

CONSTANTINE: Really? It is a rare thing in the Empire, a man who wants to stop violence, not add to it. Bring him to me.

GAIUS: As Caesar commands.

CONSTANTINE: If he really was trying to stop the riot, this man might be the key. I've been looking so long for someone who both knows what it happening on the streets and will speak of it.

FAUSTA: Then may the Lord grant that this is the man you seek.

GAIUS: The prisoner, Caesar.

CONSTANTINE: Leave us.

GAIUS: Caesar?

CONSTANTINE: Go. You too, Fausta.

FAUSTA: Oh. As you wish, Caesar.

DOCTOR: This is more like it. Emperor Constantine, I presume. I am the Doctor. I must say, much as I admired your previous hospitality, I do like the upgrade. To what do I owe the pleasure?

CONSTANTINE: They tell me you were trying to stop the riot.

DOCTOR: Trying. Trying and failing, unfortunately.

CONSTANTINE: Why?

DOCTOR: Rioters so rarely listen to reason.

CONSTANTINE: Why were you there, Doctor? Why were you involved? And why were you attempting to stop the riot?

DOCTOR: I'm sorry, Caesar, it's been rather a trying evening. I was there by accident. In the wrong place at the wrong time, I'm afraid. Couldn't get out of the way, so trying to stop the violence rather seemed the thing to do.

CONSTANTINE: Then you are not involved in the religious debate at all.

DOCTOR: I wouldn't say that. I've been following the controversy as closely as I can. Quite fascinating.

CONSTANTINE: Are you a member of one of the religious parties? A follower of Alexander, perhaps?

DOCTOR: No. I'm very much interested in the outcome of the debate, but I'm trying to keep an open mind on the issues.

CONSTANTINE: Interesting. That is something I too am trying to achieve. Not that the bishops are happy with it.

DOCTOR: I can imagine. Must be very hard for you, Caesar, being fought over by these different factions.

CONSTANTINE: The bishops write to me continually, trying to sway me one way or the other. If it is not Alexander, then it is Eusebius looking to wear me down letter by letter.

DOCTOR: But there are worse things than bishops.

CONSTANTINE: These riots are becoming impossible. Rome has always been about keeping the mob satisfied and in check. But these rioters, I do not know how to satisfy them. I do not know what they want.

DOCTOR: Which is why you summoned me. You were hoping I could give you an insight into how the mobs think.

CONSTANTINE: Yes.

DOCTOR: Don't you think the Council will solve that problem?

CONSTANTINE: I do not know, Doctor. I would like to think so, but without help I cannot be sure. You seem to want the violence ended as much as I do. I need someone like you.

DOCTOR: I might regret asking this, Caesar, but how do you know you can trust me?

CONSTANTINE: Oh, what harm can you do? You're just one man. The possible benefits far outweigh the dangers. When it comes to the mob, Doctor, I am out of options. What is a riot today might become an uprising tomorrow, and that I will not allow.

DOCTOR: Quite.

CONSTANTINE: I will send the army to pacify them if I must, but if the problem can be stopped at its source, so much the better. I'm not afraid of spilling blood, Doctor, but I would prefer not to spill it needlessly.

DOCTOR: Then I'm honoured to help.

CONSTANTINE: Good. You will report here at the Imperial Palace every evening. Centurion!

(Door opens.)

GAIUS: Caesar.

CONSTANTINE: Show this man back to the street.

DOCTOR: There is just one more thing, Caesar.

CONSTANTINE: Yes?

DOCTOR: It might make the factions more ready to accept me if I were at the Council.

CONSTANTINE: Then it is done. I will see you there tomorrow. Good fortune go with you, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Thank you, Caesar. I think I'm going to need it.

MAN: Here you are, Miss.

PERI: Thanks for your help, guys. We'll be fine from here.

ERIMEM: He's not here, Peri.

PERI: Oh, Doctor, what have you got yourself into this time?

ERIMEM: Did you see what happened to him during the riot?

PERI: No. Things happened too fast. We'll have to go and find him.

DOCTOR: No need for that, Peri.

PERI: Oh, Doctor! Thank goodness you're safe.

DOCTOR: We've been in worse scrapes than that. All it took was a word in the Emperor's ear.

ERIMEM: You saw the Emperor?

PERI: Same old Doctor. Ten minutes after we arrive, you manage to have a face-to-face with the most important man on the planet.

DOCTOR: And a thoroughly nice fellow he was, too. I've even got a personal invitation to the Council tomorrow.

ERIMEM: Nice? We have heard otherwise, Doctor. That he is a tyrant whose rule is only tolerated due to the strength of his armies.

DOCTOR: Who've you been talking to, Erimem?

ERIMEM: How much do you really know about this time, Doctor? Have you visited it before?

DOCTOR: I've studied this period, read the records made by those who attended the Council. I've always been interested in the reign of Constantine, the first Roman Emperor to embrace Christianity.

ERIMEM: But you haven't actually been here. You have told be before that history is written by the victors. Those documents you studied do not contain the truth. We have spoken to a man here. He told us of Constantine, told us how this Emperor fought bloody wars with his relatives to seize control for himself, how he had his own wife's brother assassinated because he thought him a threat. This man has not embraced Christianity, Doctor. He just claims he has.

DOCTOR: The man you spoke to, what was his name?

PERI: He was called Arius.

DOCTOR: Arius. I didn't think he was here. I thought he would stay in Alexandria. He certainly wasn't invited to the Council.

ERIMEM: No, he is not invited. He does not even have a chance to defend himself. It is not fair, Doctor.

DOCTOR: No, it isn't, but that's the way things work in this time. There's not much we can do about it.

ERIMEM: But Doctor, we have helped people like Arius time and again. He could be exiled or even killed if he is condemned by the Council. His followers could be imprisoned or executed. We could stop that from happening. We should give him a voice in the Council.

DOCTOR: Erimem, we already know what happened here. The outcome is already decided. We can't change history. Athanasius and his supporters will be victorious and Arius will be anathematised and exiled.

ERIMEM: What is history? This is my future, Doctor. We change things everywhere we go. Why not here? I thought you would be glad to lend our aid to the oppressed.

PERI: Hold on. Erimem's right. We've changed some huge things before, things that must have changed the future for someone somewhere.

DOCTOR: Yes, of course we've changed things before. History is tough, and most changes we can make are swallowed up in the vastness of the whole, but there are certain moments, certain events, that shape history to such an extent that if they're changed, everything that follows must change. This is one of those moments.

PERI: But how? This is just some debate about some tiny difference in what Christians believe. I don't think even the Pastor back home would know or care much about it. Why should this make such a huge difference?

DOCTOR: It's not the point of doctrine that matters, it's about what it represents and what the Council achieves. It's about Christianity and politics truly coming together for the first time.

PERI: But no one knows about it.

DOCTOR: Think, Peri. The result of this Council is a cementing of belief that will shape the Church for centuries to come. Through the power of the Church it will be something that will shape the whole of western Europe, and through that the world. Even in your time, the Creed put together by this Council is repeated every Sunday in Christian churches.

PERI: Well, I've never heard of it. The church I was dragged to every Sunday didn't talk about anything like this.

DOCTOR: Not an Episcopalian, then.

PERI: Baptist. Well, my Mom was.

DOCTOR: The simple fact is, the Christian Church is vastly powerful from this point onwards. Change that Church and you change the world.

ERIMEM: I have seen this Church in action, Doctor. I've met Richelieu. Is it a good thing, the power of the Church? I do not think so. That it is a religion does not keep it from being a tyranny.

DOCTOR: It's human, Erimem. The Church was never going to be perfect. Good or bad, though, it's part of history.

ERIMEM: Why should we fight to keep it the same? You say if we change things here, then we change that future. Who is to say that would not be a good thing? Let the Church from hereon be based on fairness and tolerance. Let history change!

DOCTOR: That's not enough. Even with the best intentions, the change might lead to terrible consequences. I can't let you or anyone interfere in this. We should just get into the Tardis and leave now.

PERI: Maybe that would be best.

ERIMEM: No.

DOCTOR: No? I can't stay here and let you change things. Come on.

ERIMEM: No.

PERI: Erimem, what are you doing?

ERIMEM: I'm staying.

DOCTOR: If you stay, you will be staying forever. You will be stranded in this time.

ERIMEM: Then I will stay forever. I have made a promise to an honourable man, and I intend to keep it. Go if

you wish, Doctor, but I will not come with you.

**[Part Two]**

PERI: No! This is... well, it's just stupid. We can't leave her behind, Doctor. We just can't! Not like this.

DOCTOR: No, I suppose we can't. What exactly did you promise Arius, Erimem?

ERIMEM: To help him. I did not say how, exactly. I'm still unsure what the best way might be.

DOCTOR: Then please listen to me. You only have the vaguest of ideas about the situation here in Nicaea.

Find out more before you do anything. I think you've got the Emperor's character badly wrong, for a start.

PERI: Didn't you say you'd got yourself a personal invitation to the Council tomorrow, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Yes.

PERI: So, let's start there. You'll be able to get us in, right? After all, we are your loyal assistants.

DOCTOR: It's true that Alexander was able to take his clerk into the Council. You are women, but

PERI: Then it's settled. We'll come with you tomorrow, agreed?

ERIMEM: As you wish, Peri. I will agree to this plan.

DOCTOR: Good. Now, if I may suggest, it is about time we found ourselves an inn. I don't know about you two, but I've had quite enough excitement for one day.

(Crowd noises.)

DOCTOR: Excuse me. Sorry. If you could just let us through, thank you.

PERI: What are they all expecting to see?

DOCTOR: It's not what they expect to see, Peri, it's what they expect to hear. These people will be the first to hear about whatever happens in the Council.

ERIMEM: Can they not guess?

DOCTOR: For these people, things aren't cut and dried yet. This crowd is most likely made up of supporters of several different factions. We may know what will happen, but for them it's anyone's guess.

PERI: Must make a change for them not to be throwing stones at each other.

DOCTOR: Peri.

PERI: I know, I know. Not everyone interested in a cause turns to violence. It's just hard to forget last night so quickly.

DOCTOR: Mmm. Ah, here we are. Oh, it's Gaius the Centurion. I don't think he likes me.

GAIUS: Name?

DOCTOR: I'm the Doctor, and these are my assistants, Peri and Erimem.

GAIUS: Oh, yes. You. Well, the Emperor ordered us to let you in, Doctor, but he didn't say anything about these two.

DOCTOR: They're my clerks. You let Alexander's clerk in with him, didn't you?

GAIUS: They're women.

DOCTOR: Didn't Paul himself have female friends and disciples working with him in the Church?

GAIUS: Who?

DOCTOR: Did he not say in his letter to the Church in Rome, I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a Deaconess of the Church in Cenchreae, that you may receive her in the Lord as befits the saints.

GAIUS: If you say so. Fine, I'll just take your word for it. You Christians. You have the oddest ideas. Just don't let these two cause any trouble.

DOCTOR: Quiet as mice. You have my word.

GAIUS: Well, get going, then. Name?

(Whispering)

PERI: Full of surprises, aren't you, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Hmm?

PERI: Time traveller, fast rider and bowler, Biblical scholar.

DOCTOR: If you want to understand this period of history, you have to know the scriptures these people regarded as holy. Everything refers back to them. They're the closest they can get to Jesus himself. Besides, they can come in handy every so often.

PERI: Quite. So, when are we expecting the head honcho?

DOCTOR: Not long now.

(Fanfare.)

DOCTOR: Ah. Right on time.

GAIUS: Hail Caesar!

CROWD: Hail Caesar!

PERI: Wow. Every inch the Emperor. I thought the whole gold and purple thing was just in movies, but I guess not.

CONSTANTINE: It was once my chief desire, dearest friends, to enjoy the spectacle of your united presence. Now that this desire is fulfilled, I feel myself bound to render thanks to God, the universal King, because in



addition to all his other benefits, he has granted me a blessing higher than all the rest in permitting me to see you not only all assembled together, but all united in a common harmony of sentiment.

PERI: He wishes.

DOCTOR: Shh.

CONSTANTINE: I pray, therefore, that no malignant adversary may henceforth interfere to mar our happy state. I pray that now the impious hostility of the tyrants has been forever removed by the power of God our Saviour, that

ERIMEM: Removed? Removed indeed, but not by the power of his god.

CONSTANTINE: No other means for exposing the divine law to blasphemous calumny. For in my judgement, strife within the Church of God is far more evil and dangerous than any kind of war or conflict, and these our differences appear to me more grievous than any outward trouble. Delay not then, dear friends. Delay not, you ministers of God and faithful servants of Him who is our common Lord and Saviour. Begin from this moment to discard the perplexities on controversy by embracing the principles of peace, for by such conduct you will at the same time be acting in a manner most pleasing to the supreme God, and you will confer an exceeding favour on me who am your fellow servant.

(Polite applause.)

DOCTOR: You can say what you like about Constantine, but he certainly knows how to give an opening speech.

ARIUS: It's beginning.

CLEMENT: Yes. I saw the last one coming in. The Emperor's probably welcoming them right now.

ARIUS: Thank you, my friend. I know it will cost you to keep watch on the Council today rather than standing at your market stall.

CLEMENT: It's only a day, Arius. There are more important things than money.

ARIUS: Still, I wish more felt as you do, Clement. Just think of the bishops gathered there in the Council, all aching to throw me out of the Church and then the Empire. How long do you think it will take them to judge me?

CLEMENT: Longer than you might think, I'd say. Those two women are in there with them.

ARIUS: Erimem and Peri managed to gain access to the Council?

CLEMENT: The Lord alone knows how they managed it, but they're in there. You said Erimem promised to help, and she's working for you already.

ARIUS: Truly God is with us, Clement. I could not have hoped for better. At last Constantine shall hear our voice.

CLEMENT: Our voice shall speak in the Council, certainly, but Constantine still may not hear.

ARIUS: We cannot ask for more. Perhaps he will be swayed, perhaps he will not. All I ask is that our beliefs are presented, presented fairly.

CLEMENT: I just hope it'll be enough.

ATHANASIUS: As ever, most worthy Constantine, your words cannot fail to move us. Truly, together we will seek an agreement which satisfies even the most difficult among us. However, not all who call themselves members of this Church have the same peaceful and harmonious purpose. If the Church is to come together in common belief, we must first cast out those who seek to divide us, who want nothing more than for the Church to be at odds. Might we begin, great Caesar, by anathematising those disruptive of elements before we can move on to mend the damage they have done.

CONSTANTINE: It seems, clerk Athanasius, that you have names in mind. This Council is free to raise those questions it most desires to have settled. Name your names if you wish it.

ATHANASIUS: Thank you, my Emperor. Bishops of the most Holy Church of Christ, I name before you Arius, a presbyter of my home diocese of Alexandria. This evil fellow is the root of all the discord the Church now suffers. Not content with holding his heretical views alone, he has poisoned those around him, spreading heresy throughout the body of the Church. Even when he saw the damage he was doing, he refused to recant, preferring to defy his superiors, even his bishop. The man has no respect, no concern for unity, no moral qualms with the damage he is even now doing. He should be cast out by this Council, exiled irrevocably from our number, and his heresy condemned forever after.

ERIMEM: Do you see this, Doctor? Arius was right. These men would condemn him out of hand without even a discussion. No voices are raised to defend him. This is not as it should be.

DOCTOR: Erimem, what are you doing? Sit down!

ERIMEM: What one of these spineless creatures would be doing if this Council was in any way just.

DOCTOR: No, Erimem, stop, please.

ERIMEM: Bishops of the Council, hear me! In what way are you doing God's work here? You look to judge a man without even allowing him to speak in his defence. Athanasius, you say he has no concern for unity. But I have met him. I know how deeply he cares for the Church. If damage is caused, it is because you became rigid and refused to hear him in peace.

DOCTOR: Sit down.

ATHANASIUS: Who is this who dares to speak to us in such a way?  
ERIMEM: I am a friend of Arius. I come to speak for him, that his voice may be heard at this Council, and not be so easily forgotten or cast aside.  
ATHANASIUS: This is an outrage! Arius has no right to be at this Council, and no right to send another in his place. And you a woman!  
ERIMEM: He has every right. That is, if this Council is to see justice done.  
ATHANASIUS: Caesar, surely this woman cannot have been invited here.  
CONSTANTINE: Indeed not. Guards.  
ERIMEM: You are determined not to hear, Athanasius. Are Arius's ideas so attractive that you fear to be won over if you hear them spoken? Or are you afraid these bishops might be swayed?  
ATHANASIUS: Enough! Remove her!  
ERIMEM: You may throw me from this Council, but you will not find it so easy to ignore the wishes of the people. Arius is not without followers. You make a mistake here. Ah! Let go of me!  
DOCTOR: Come on, Peri. Sorry, coming through!

GAIUS: A clerk, is it? Troublemaker more like. The Emperor's going to have my head for this. I should never have let you inside in the first place.  
ERIMEM: I won't leave.  
GAIUS: Another word from you, girl, and I'll have you down to the cells so quickly your feet won't touch the ground! Now get going, and if I see your face round here again, you'll be in trouble.  
PERI: Erimem, are you all right?  
DOCTOR: What on Earth do you think you were doing?  
ERIMEM: I told you, Doctor. Arius deserves a fair hearing.  
DOCTOR: What happened to you finding out more about the situation?  
ERIMEM: I can see the situation. A collection of powerful men determined to use their power to oppress others. If I can fight that oppression, I will.  
DOCTOR: By altering the balance of history? And as if that weren't enough, at the same time you're trying to get all three of us arrested for disrupting the Emperor's affairs. This must stop.  
ERIMEM: I made a promise, Doctor! I intend to keep it.  
DOCTOR: This is no place for childish ideas of honour. You're putting us all at risk.  
ERIMEM: Then perhaps I should to where my childish honour is needed.  
DOCTOR: You can't just walk from this. Erimem, just, just wait for a moment.  
ERIMEM: Get off me!  
DOCTOR: Erimem.  
PERI: Erimem, wait!  
GAIUS: No, you don't. She might run off, but you're not going anywhere. I reckon the Emperor might want a word with you.  
DOCTOR: She doesn't know Nicaea. Anything could happen to her out there alone.  
GAIUS: Not my problem. And here he is. Hail Caesar!  
CONSTANTINE: Ah, Doctor. Just the man I wanted to talk to.

CONSTANTINE: Who was she?  
DOCTOR: She was... she is one of my companions.  
CONSTANTINE: Companion. You mean...  
PERI: He means an assistant.  
CONSTANTINE: An assistant. So the woman who does her very best to sabotage the first day of my Council, a meeting of minds vital for the future of the Empire, this person is your assistant.  
DOCTOR: I'm afraid so.  
CONSTANTINE: Give me one reason why I should not have you thrown into the cells immediately. I trusted you, then you bring this, this harpy into my Council. Was this your intention all along? Did you fool me into allowing you to attend just so you could do this?  
PERI: Erimem's no harpy. She just wanted to be heard.  
CONSTANTINE: Silence, girl.  
DOCTOR: Peri, please. Believe me, Caesar, I had no idea she was going to do what she did. Certainly if I had known I would have done my best to stop her.  
CONSTANTINE: Hmm. Is she a supporter of Arius? Does she lead any of his followers? Tell me that you know this at least, Doctor, that my judgement of your skills was not entirely amiss.  
DOCTOR: I don't know. I'm sorry.  
CONSTANTINE: Is she not your assistant? How could you not know her allegiances? I warn you, Doctor, do not lie to me. You, girl. What do you know of this?  
PERI: I'm not sure. She likes Arius's ideas, I think.  
CONSTANTINE: So, a follower of his at the very least. What will she do next? She ran from you, yes?  
DOCTOR: I assure you she won't cause any more problems.

CONSTANTINE: Easy for you to say, Doctor. You would call her to heel, but what if she will not obey you? No, I have a better idea.

DOCTOR: She has done no real harm. I'm sure she will listen to reason.

CONSTANTINE: No real harm? The Council is in uproar. Instead of making headway, they will have spent the morning arguing. We all know Arius is a problem. Every day this split continues, the unity of the Empire is in danger! That girl of yours has done more than enough damage, and that was the work of a moment.

PERI: Caesar, Erimem might go overboard at times, but she's not out to hurt you or your Empire. Not really. If she realises she's really putting people in danger or something, she'd stop.

DOCTOR: We just need to show her what harm she's really doing. We can do that, I promise you.

CONSTANTINE: You make it sound so easy. You have failed me once, Doctor. Why should I trust you again?

DOCTOR: The task you gave me was to find out more about the civil disturbances in the city. I have not failed yet.

CONSTANTINE: Do not play games with me. If you do my bidding you must support me in all things. In allowing this disturbance in the Council you went against my will. Take care, Doctor. I could just as easily send my soldiers after this girl and solve my problem that way. You say you can convince her of the truth, but I think locking her up would deal with the problem more surely.

DOCTOR: Forgive me, Caesar. Your soldiers are not needed. Give us a day to find her and talk to her.

CONSTANTINE: All right. I will try it your way for now. But I warn you, Doctor, your assurances had better be proved true or it will be the worse for you and your assistants.

FAUSTA: I heard raised voices, Caesar. I thought you might... oh. Forgive me. I have interrupted.

CONSTANTINE: You knew from the moment you decided to come in here that you would be interrupting. Think you I do not know how your mind works, Fausta?

PERI: (sotto) Who's she?

CONSTANTINE: So I am forced to introductions. Girl, this is my wife. Fausta, this is an assistant to the Doctor. His second, it seems.

FAUSTA: Girl? You do not know her name?

PERI: I'm Peri. Hi.

FAUSTA: What an interesting accent you have, my dear. Where are you from?

PERI: Er

CONSTANTINE: Enough of this prattle! Doctor, you have your instructions.

DOCTOR: I think that's our cue to leave, Peri. Don't worry, Caesar. I won't disappoint you.

CONSTANTINE: Take care you do not. Leave me.

(Footsteps, door closes.)

CONSTANTINE: Fausta, if ever you do that again, ever, there will be consequences. Do you understand?

FAUSTA: Of course, my husband. I apologise. It will not happen again.

CONSTANTINE: Hmm. Gaius?

GAIUS: Caesar.

CONSTANTINE: Follow them. Tell me of everywhere they go, everyone they speak to, every word they say. And if you have a chance to capture any of the ringleaders, that girl especially, do so.

GAIUS: As you command.

ERIMEM: Oh, thank the gods. At last.

(Knocks on door. Door opens.)

CLEMENT: Yeah? What are you doing here?

ERIMEM: What are you doing here? This is Arius's house, is it not?

CLEMENT: It is. I work for him, you might say, when I'm not on my stall. I saw you go into the Council this morning. What happened?

ERIMEM: I, I failed, Clement. They would not hear me.

CLEMENT: Wait a minute. Arius will want to hear this. Come in, quickly. He's just upstairs.

ARIUS: Erimem? I thought you were at the Council.

ERIMEM: I was.

ARIUS: What happened? What did they say?

ERIMEM: I'm afraid I was not there for long. I heard the Emperor give his opening speech, and then Athanasius got up.

ARIUS: Did they mention me?

ERIMEM: The Emperor did not. He spoke of guarding against any malignant adversary and the danger of blasphemous calumny. I think you were chief in his thoughts, though he did not speak your name. Athanasius was not so coy.

ARIUS: This was not unexpected, Erimem.

ERIMEM: It make it no better! It mattered not to any of them that you were unable to speak in your defence.

ARIUS: You spoke for me?

ERIMEM: I could not remain silent. It was not right for the man to speak so.

CLEMENT: And here you are. Constantine must have disliked your words.

ERIMEM: He had me removed, dragged out by his guards.

ARIUS: You tried, Erimem. It was all you could do.

ERIMEM: No, I can do a lot more than that. I failed at the Council itself, but that need not be the end. I was a leader once. I know how to speak to the people, how to command attention and obedience. I am not finished here. Constantine wishes to show he listens to the will of the people, does he not?

CLEMENT: Truly.

ERIMEM: Then we shall gather your supporters together. We shall go to the palace, and show him what the people really think. He may remove me from his Council, but he cannot ignore a crowd of people at his door!

ARIUS: I want no violence, Erimem. A crowd of people will

ERIMEM: They will not be there to fight.

CLEMENT: Think of it. Every one of us, all those normal people would be risking their lives just to speak up for you, Arius. We'll be able to do something at last. The Emperor won't be able to ignore us any more.

ARIUS: (sigh) Agreed, then. I leave this in your hands, Erimem. You know how to achieve it better than I. May God be with you.

ERIMEM: Thank you, Arius. You and your followers shall be heard.

CLEMENT: This is wonderful, Erimem. We must work together on this. Come with me. I can introduce you to some more people who will help us.

ERIMEM: Lead on, Clement.

ATHANASIUS: A good morning's work, but there's still much to be done. Oh, where is he? Damn it, Julius, where are you hiding this time?

JULIUS: Talking to yourself again, Athanasius?

ATHANASIUS: Oh! In the name of all that's holy, must you creep up on me like that?

JULIUS: It's worth it for the look on your face. How did things proceed in the Council?

ATHANASIUS: Better than we could have hoped. That heretic Arius has at most three moderate voices defending him. Even they have no conviction. They know which way the wind is blowing.

JULIUS: Congratulations. Does this mean you no longer need my services?

ATHANASIUS: Not yet, Julius. A new player appeared this morning at the Council. She spoke for Arius. How is it you did not warn us about her?

JULIUS: A woman? I had not heard that any women would even be admitted to the Council. Certainly Arius has his share of women among his supporters, but none that stand out as leaders. Now you mention it, I noticed one woman being hauled out by the guards. Would that be her?

ATHANASIUS: It sounds like it may be. She was forcibly removed from the Council, a sign at least that Constantine knows how to treat unruly elements. Did you hear her name?

JULIUS: I think one of her friends called her Erimem. An Egyptian woman.

ATHANASIUS: That is her. I will not have our hard work destroyed by this random element, Julius. I want you to find her. Find out who she is, where she came from, and whether she presents a threat. Work quickly, Julius. Time is precious, and I do not want Constantine distracted at a crucial moment.

JULIUS: As you wish. I will report back to you tonight. Unless she is well-hidden, I will have your answers by then.

ATHANASIUS: Tonight, then. For now, I must return to Alexander and the other bishops. Go swift, Julius. Go with God.

PERI: What an ogre.

DOCTOR: Constantine? I think we just caught him at a bad time, Peri.

PERI: I thought we might end up in the dungeons for sure. You know what he said about sending soldiers after Erimem.

DOCTOR: He was only trying to scare us.

PERI: Well, he succeeded. What if there's more to it than that? What if he does send the army out?

DOCTOR: Then we're in trouble. But look on the bright side. He's let us go, and we've got a chance to find Erimem and set her right.

PERI: Yeah. That's the other thing.

DOCTOR: The other thing?

PERI: Well, Constantine didn't really come across as the gentle fluffy type. Arius is going to be in big trouble if the Council decides against him, isn't he? Especially if he puts up a fight. How can it be right for us to just stand aside and let that happen?

DOCTOR: He won't be hurt or killed, if that's what you mean. He'll be exiled. But there are worse fates. The only problem is if Erimem's meddling has already changed things. If she's stirred up Arius and his supporters enough to make them actually fight the Emperor, then anything could happen. If she keeps interfering, things will only get worse. She's putting herself in terrible danger.

PERI: She's in danger? But even if she messes up history, she wouldn't be doing anything to her own timeline, would she?

DOCTOR: Although I'm terribly worried about what Erimem's doing to the timeline, and with it the lives of every living being on Earth, that's not my only concern. She's not just endangering the planet, she's risking her own life. Do you think Constantine is happy to have a random element running around his city causing trouble? Do you think the leader of the opposing faction will take kindly to her support of Arius?

PERI: I hadn't thought about that.

DOCTOR: No, I'd like to say neither has Erimem, but I'm more afraid that she has, and has decided to do this regardless.

PERI: I don't pretend to know how this whole changing history thing goes, Doctor. If you say she's risking changing the future whatever, I believe you. What's the next step?

DOCTOR: You find Erimem.

PERI: Me? What about you?

DOCTOR: I don't know if you've noticed, Peri, but Erimem isn't that keen on me right now. I hate to say it, but she might just run again. I need you to talk to her.

PERI: I don't even know where she's gone. She could be anywhere.

DOCTOR: She could be, but I'd lay odds she's gone back to Arius. Can you find your way back there?

PERI: I guess so. What will you be doing?

DOCTOR: I'll be scouting around the city just in case she isn't with Arius. Take care, and I'll meet you back at the Tardis whatever happens.

PERI: Okay, Doctor. Happy hunting. Now, let's just hope I can remember the way back.

ERIMEM: They are strong people, Clement. They will stand firm even in the face of the Emperor's soldiers, I am certain.

CLEMENT: You say they need officers, Erimem. Are we an army then?

ERIMEM: Not exactly, no, but it is a good way to think on it. We need trusted people, respected leaders, spread throughout the crowd. They will guide the others.

ARIUS: The folk here are good people, Erimem, but we are not so organised as you seem to think. They're just ordinary men and women. When they come together it is rarely at the direction of another.

CLEMENT: Rarely, but it's not unheard of. It'll be easy enough to gather your supporters at a certain time, Arius. Choosing our officers will be a harder task, but we can find likely people in time.

ARIUS: I'm not sure I like this talk of armies and officers. It makes us sound like we are rebels going against the Emperor.

CLEMENT: We're certainly not obeying him in this, Arius.

ERIMEM: You must not think of yourselves as opposing the Emperor, Clement. You are trying to show him what his people think. You are not there to go up against him.

CLEMENT: As you say, Erimem. But I still think...

(Knocking on door.)

ARIUS: No one is expected. Clement? A dagger, Clement? Is that necessary?

CLEMENT: A precaution, nothing more. Stay here.

(Door and closes, footsteps, door opens.)

CLEMENT [OC]: You?

PERI [OC]: The shopkeeper. But isn't this Arius's place?

CLEMENT [OC]: It is. You're Erimem's friend. Why have you come back?

ERIMEM: Peri?

(Door closes. Footsteps, door opens.)

PERI: Oh, thank goodness you're here, Erimem. When you ran off I was so scared. What possessed you? And why is this guy here?

ERIMEM: Clement has done much to support Arius in Nicaea.

CLEMENT: You don't have to be a bishop to care about what's going on in the Church. Even us shopkeepers can get involved.

PERI: Oh, I didn't mean to insult you, Clement. I was surprised, that's all. Erimem, can we talk?

ERIMEM: I don't know, Peri. What do you want to talk about?

PERI: I want you to come back to the Tardis with me. This has all just gone too far.

ARIUS: Too far?

PERI: Yes. No offence, Arius, and I sympathise with your position, I really do, but we can't get involved with this.

ERIMEM: Can we not? I thought you were my friend, Peri, and now you think to order me around just like the Doctor.

PERI: Oh, Erimem. I am your friend, and so is the Doctor. That's why we can't stand around and watch you put yourself in danger like this.

ERIMEM: When have we not been in danger, travelling with the Doctor? Why do you suddenly care now?

PERI: Okay. First, I've always cared, and you know it. Second, this is special. If you keep on, Constantine is going to send soldiers out after you. He'll kill you!

ERIMEM: I am not afraid of his soldiers. I have faced worse many times before. There are more important

things at stake here than my life.

PERI: But there aren't! We know how things are going to work out, and anything you do will only make things that much worse. Please, Erimem. You have to believe me.

ERIMEM: No! This is not my friend Peri talking. This is a puppet of the Doctor repeating his words again and again. I thought you agreed with me. I thought you understood. I thought you cared. Now you come back to me like this?

PERI: Erimem, it's not

ERIMEM: I do not wish to hear you any more. Just go, Peri.

CLEMENT: You heard the lady.

PERI: Please, you

ERIMEM: Just go!

DOCTOR: Not at the Tardis, then.

FAUSTA: Doctor.

DOCTOR: Empress. What are you doing out here?

FAUSTA: Simply taking the air, Doctor. Seeing the sights of Nicaea. A woman of the court cannot spend all day indoors, you know, and Nicaea is such a beautiful city. It would be a shame for me to stay behind the walls of the palace, don't you think?

DOCTOR: Surely, my lady, you're aware the streets aren't quite as safe as they might be.

FAUSTA: I have my guards. They are ample protection if things become unsafe. Come, Doctor. Walk with me.

DOCTOR: Now you've got me, Fausta, why don't you tell me the real reason you're out in the streets. Did you follow me?

FAUSTA: Follow? Of course not. I am merely taking some light exercise. The fact we bumped into each other is simple chance. Or do you not believe in chance, Doctor? Are you one of these people who thinks everything that happens is because of the will of the gods?

DOCTOR: Gods?

FAUSTA: Of the will of God, then. Old phrases die hard.

DOCTOR: I think it was more likely your will, my lady.

FAUSTA: Oh, have it your own way, then. Truth to tell, I am glad we met, Doctor. You intrigue me, you and your little assistant. You are so different from anyone else at court, or in the whole of the Empire, as far as I can tell. You seem to know so much, and Constantine tells me so little.

DOCTOR: I doubt I know much more about things here in Nicaea than you do, Empress.

FAUSTA: So? You flatter me, Doctor. Yet I think I might know something that you do not.

DOCTOR: Really?

FAUSTA: Really. And I wish to share it with you, Doctor.

DOCTOR: In exchange for what?

FAUSTA: Exchange? What a vulgar thought. No, I simply want to see your reaction. Although, if you were to keep me in your confidence in future, that would also be very welcome.

DOCTOR: Very well. If I learn anything new, you'll be the first to know.

FAUSTA: Wonderful. Take this ring. It is a sign to any guards on the palace that you have my favour and should be allowed entrance. Now to business. Constantine has had you followed. You and the girl first, but since you sent her away the man has been following her. He will find where Arius is living, and Constantine will almost certainly send legionaries there.

DOCTOR: What?

FAUSTA: Most regrettable.

DOCTOR: Why are you telling me this?

FAUSTA: My husband is a wise man and a strong leader, but he has this tendency go a little too far. He would use a hammer to crack a nut. Sometimes the delicate touch is what is needed.

DOCTOR: I have to go to them. I have to find them.

FAUSTA: Do you know where Arius is living?

DOCTOR: No, but... No, I don't.

FAUSTA: Oh dear. I was almost sure you must have known. For such a clever, secretive man I had thought Arius's whereabouts would be an obvious thing for you to know. I wish you good luck in finding them, Doctor. Remember your promise now, won't you? You will let me know whatever you discover.

DOCTOR: Yes, yes. Now please, I have to go. (runs)

FAUSTA: (distant) Do not forget, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Who am I fooling? I have no idea where Arius is. I'll never get there in time.

PERI: Erimem, you can't mean that.

CLEMENT: Enough of this. She does not want you here.

PERI: All right! Fine. You don't need to drag me. Get off me! Clement, I can walk on my own. (leaves)

ERIMEM: Oh, what's happening to us?

ARIUS: Are you all right, Erimem?  
CLEMENT: She'll be better for that friend of hers being gone.  
(Knocking on door.)  
CLEMENT: What now? You stay here.  
(Opens door.)  
PERI: You have to get out of here! Erimem, Arius, you have to run now!  
ARIUS: What's going on, Peri?  
PERI: Now! You have to leave now! Legionaries.  
ERIMEM: Legionaries?  
PERI: I saw them on the street.  
CLEMENT: Enough of this. We've had enough of your lies. Get out!  
(Banging on door, door gives way.)  
CLEMENT: It can't be!  
PERI: Quickly, they're coming!  
CLEMENT: Legionaries. Run, Arius! Out the back!  
GAIUS: Stop in the name of the Empire! After them. Don't let the two men escape.  
(Erimem squeals.)  
GAIUS: Oh no you don't. You're staying right here.  
ERIMEM: Let me go! On what authority do you do this?  
GAIUS: By the authority of the Emperor himself.  
ERIMEM: Did you show them here, Peri? Have you betrayed me to the Emperor?  
PERI: Of course not, Erimem. I would never do  
GAIUS: Quite the tracking hound you are, girl. Led us straight here. I'm sure the Emperor will be very pleased with all you've done. And you, Erimem. Caesar will be especially glad to see you.

### [Part Three]

ERIMEM: You have betrayed me.  
PERI: I promise you, Erimem. I didn't have anything to do with this. I was trying to warn you.  
GAIUS: Less talk. I want to get this one back to the palace. Now, now. Don't make this any harder than it has to be. Come, Peri. We should get back to the Emperor.  
PERI: I didn't do anything for you, Gaius, or your precious Constantine! I'm not helping you!  
GAIUS: If that's what you want to believe. Willingly or not though, girl, you did help us. Well?  
LEGIONARY: Sorry, sir. They just vanished.  
GAIUS: At least we got one. Right, let's not keep Caesar waiting.

GAIUS: Sorry to disturb you, Caesar.  
CONSTANTINE: Well? What brings you back so soon, Gaius?  
GAIUS: I have to report our success, Caesar.  
CONSTANTINE: You have the ringleaders? Bring them in.  
GAIUS: As you command.  
PERI: Constantine, you said you were going to give the Doctor a free rein. You said we could handle things our way.  
CONSTANTINE: You had your chance and failed. Now we do things my way.  
PERI: Our time wasn't up.  
CONSTANTINE: Don't be tiresome. I am the Emperor of the greatest Empire ever seen on God's Earth, and I do not tolerate troublemakers running around my cities. This ringleader I recognise. She's rather quieter now than in my Council this morning, though. Centurion, were there not others?  
GAIUS: I'm sorry, Caesar. There were two more but they ran.  
CONSTANTINE: So, do you know who they were?  
GAIUS: Er, no, Caesar. Not as such. This girl warned them before we arrived. We didn't get a chance to have much of a look at them.  
CONSTANTINE: Peri?  
PERI: I did, and I would again. You had no right to send soldiers in there.  
CONSTANTINE: I had every right. Who were you trying to protect?  
PERI: My friend, of course. Who else?  
CONSTANTINE: You tell me. Or perhaps she could.  
ERIMEM: I will tell you nothing.  
CONSTANTINE: Oh dear, we seem to have reached an impasse. Still, we'll see if some time in the cells cannot loosen your tongues. Gaius.  
GAIUS: Of course, Caesar. Come on, you two.  
SERVANT: Forgive me, Caesar. He insisted that he should see you at once, and he carries the Empress's ring.

DOCTOR: Caesar, I must protest!

CONSTANTINE: Save your breath, Doctor. Your assistant has made protest enough already. These two shall go to the cells until they tell me what I wish to hear. Centurion.

DOCTOR: Wait. What do you want to know?

CONSTANTINE: Who it was ran from my soldiers when Erimem was captured. Who they seek to protect with their silence.

DOCTOR: It would be Arius. Who the other one was, I don't know, but Peri was to look for Erimem at Arius's lodgings.

PERI+ERIMEM: Doctor!

CONSTANTINE: And you let him escape?

GAIUS: Forgive me, Caesar. They vanished into the back alleys.

CONSTANTINE: I do not need your excuses, Centurion. Get out of my sight.

GAIUS: Caesar, the prisoner

CONSTANTINE: Is one girl. This legionary can take care of her. Now get out!

(Gaius slams the door behind him.)

ERIMEM: So you are Constantine.

CONSTANTINE: I am Emperor Constantine, yes. And you are?

ERIMEM: I am Erimem.

CONSTANTINE: An Egyptian, in league with the disgraced presbyter. This is your last chance. Where are your friends, Erimem?

ERIMEM: I do not know.

CONSTANTINE: A pity. Legionary!

LEGIONARY: Caesar.

CONSTANTINE: Take her to the cells.

DOCTOR: Please, Caesar, I beg you. This is unnecessary.

CONSTANTINE: No, Doctor. She has already caused me enough trouble. This heretic will be safer locked up where I can be sure she will no longer be a problem.

ERIMEM: I am no heretic!

CONSTANTINE: You follow Arius.

ERIMEM: I am not a Christian. I listened to him because he is concerned with justice and truth. He is true to what he believes, while you, you have no use for the truth.

CONSTANTINE: I'll tell you the truth, you vicious little harpy! While I try to hold this Church, this Empire together, you and your friends do all you can to rip it apart. And for what? Your petty disagreements are destroying my Empire.

ERIMEM: So instead of listening to your people, you oppress them. You are the worst kind of hypocrite. You talk of becoming a Christian, but you have no idea of what that actually means. Arius has told me of you, and of the religion you claim to follow. While you speak of forgiveness and reconciliation at one moment, you resort to assassination and tyranny the next. What kind of leader are you?

CONSTANTINE: Enough! Get her out of here! Take her away.

PERI: Please, Emperor, don't

CONSTANTINE: Silence! Or do you wish to join her? Legionary.

ERIMEM: No! Ah!

CONSTANTINE: Stop her! Guards!

PERI: Run, Erimem. Come on, Doctor. We've got to go with her.

DOCTOR: Er, Peri.

CONSTANTINE: Stay where you are, woman, unless you wish the Doctor to pay the price. Don't worry, my legionaries should get the Egyptian soon enough.

LEGIONARY: (distant) Stop in the name of the Emperor.

CLEMENT: Erimem, over here.

ERIMEM: (breathless) Clement?

CLEMENT: Quick, while the guards are still down.

ERIMEM: What did you

CLEMENT: No time. Get through the gate. Come on, into this alley.

ERIMEM: Those two are not going to give up, and there will be more behind them.

CLEMENT: We've just got to outrun them. Keep going. When we get to the end of the alley, turn argh!

ERIMEM: Clement! Get up! They're nearly upon us.

CLEMENT: No time. We'll have to fight this one. Are you ready?

ERIMEM: I suppose I will have to be.

CLEMENT: Now!

(Swords drawn. Grunts, thud.)

ERIMEM: Are they...

CLEMENT: Dead. Good riddance. Come, we must find Arius.



ERIMEM: Did you have to kill them?

CLEMENT: We had no choice. They would have captured us.

ERIMEM: But they would not have killed us. I had not thought a stallholder would be so blood-thirsty.

CLEMENT: We don't have time for this, Erimem. Arius is waiting and more legionaries are on the way. We can't stay here.

ERIMEM: No. No, we cannot. Lead on then, Clement. I will follow.

CONSTANTINE: What have you done? I trust you, Doctor, and you repay me with this.

DOCTOR: You brought this on yourself, Caesar. You sent me to talk with Erimem. I was going to do that, but you couldn't wait, could you? You sent your soldiers after, behind my back. You lied to me.

CONSTANTINE: You dare say this to me, the Emperor of Rome?

PERI: Please be careful, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Don't worry, Peri. You want to stab me, Constantine? Why wait? You're the Emperor, after all. You could kill me in a moment and nobody would ask any questions, would they? Go on.

CONSTANTINE: I should. But no. What good would that do? No, Doctor. I won't kill you. You're still too useful for that. You must know a lot about this Erimem. I need that knowledge.

PERI: You want us to help you, after you've been threatening us and waving that knife around like a madman?

CONSTANTINE: You have no other choice. You will stay here under guard until I say otherwise.

PERI: So we're prisoners now.

DOCTOR: Why are you doing this, Caesar? We want the same thing, peace for the Empire. I'm not trying to get in the way. I can help you if only you'd let me.

CONSTANTINE: Your help hasn't been much use yet, Doctor.

GAIUS: News, Caesar.

CONSTANTINE: What has happened? Is the Egyptian recaptured, Gaius?

GAIUS: No, Caesar, not yet.

CONSTANTINE: How can that be? She was in the heart of the Imperial dwellings. She had two legionaries close behind her. How could they not have caught her yet?

GAIUS: We found the legionaries, Caesar. They were in an alley not far from the palace gates, both dead. They'd been stabbed.

PERI: No!

DOCTOR: This can't be Erimem's work. She wasn't even armed.

CONSTANTINE: Two of my soldiers dead because of her. This is only the beginning.

DOCTOR: Constantine...

CONSTANTINE: Enough! You wear out my patience, Doctor. Why should I listen to another word you say?

DOCTOR: Because I'm telling you the truth. You don't know Erimem. You can't predict what she will do next. But I do. I've travelled with her for a long time. I know her better than any one of your soldiers ever could. I can find her.

PERI: You're going to get Erimem locked up again? Doctor, you can't.

DOCTOR: Peri, please try to understand. Erimem is a danger to herself out there. We must stop her.

CONSTANTINE: It is true that you know the girl. Tell me, then. Tell me where she would be hiding.

DOCTOR: I don't know yet, Caesar. We would have to go out into the streets to track her down, but I would begin at Arius's lodgings. She might begin by trying to find him again. Your legionaries can give me directions.

CONSTANTINE: Do you think me a fool? I should set you free to walk the streets once more? What guarantee do I have that you would come back?

DOCTOR: I promise you I have never betrayed you. I can only ask you to trust me in this. It is the only way to prevent Erimem continuing on her path.

CONSTANTINE: No. I have a better idea. You may go, but you will leave this girl here. She will be my guarantee for your return.

DOCTOR: I can't just leave her here with you.

CONSTANTINE: It is the only way you will leave this palace.

PERI: It's all right, Doctor. If I have to stay, I'll stay. I know you won't abandon me.

DOCTOR: Oh, Peri.

CONSTANTINE: Good. It is settled. Centurion!

GAIUS: Caesar.

CONSTANTINE: Take this girl to the cells.

GAIUS: As you command. Come on, you.

PERI: Cells?

DOCTOR: You don't have to lock her up. She's staying here of her own free will.

CONSTANTINE: And I won't have her running off of her own free will. She stays under lock and key until you get back. I suggest you get started, Doctor. The sooner you find Erimem, the sooner Peri gets out.

PERI: Good luck, Doctor.

DOCTOR: I'll be back soon, Peri. Just don't send any soldiers after me this time, Caesar.

ERIMEM: Wait here, Clement. I will see if the street ahead is empty.

CLEMENT: It won't be. It's not yet evening, Erimem. We keep our stalls up until past nightfall.

ERIMEM: So what do you suggest?

CLEMENT: I'll wait here. I'm the one with blood on my clothes. Here, take some money, go to the market and buy some new clothes.

ERIMEM: So you can change here in the alleyway. Good plan.

CLEMENT: Good. Here. Be swift. There must be legionaries after us already. The quicker we're back with Arius, the better.

ERIMEM: Do not worry. Just stay out of sight.

JULIUS: You there, you look familiar. Have we met?

ERIMEM: I do not think so.

JULIUS: No, I definitely know you. Outside the palace. The guard had just taken you out of the Council.

ERIMEM: I do not know who you are, but... I cannot stay to speak with you. I just need to buy some clothes for my friend.

JULIUS: I'm Julius. And no need to hurry on. Erimem, isn't it?

ERIMEM: How do you know my name?

JULIUS: Have you not heard? Word is getting around the city about you. There's hardly a stallholder that doesn't know your name.

ERIMEM: Word is getting round? What are they saying? How do they know?

JULIUS: The nature of cities. Something happens somewhere and half the city knows about it by nightfall.

Most people here in the market have heard what you did in the Council this morning.

ERIMEM: Oh?

JULIUS: I just wanted to say, well done. Yesterday I might have put my money on Alexander and Athanasius fair and square, but today I think Arius is back with a fighting chance. Certainly more people are speaking up for him. Truth be told, I'm starting to warm up to that Arius fellow myself. If he gets such loyalty, he's got to be worth something.

ERIMEM: Arius is a good man, and deserves a fair hearing. Now, could you direct me to a good clothing stall?

JULIUS: Wait a moment, Erimem. Your example has moved me. Is there any chance that you might be able to introduce me to more supporters of Arius? Do you have a place you work from?

ERIMEM: I do not know that would be right. The Emperor is not best fond of Arius and, I do not wish to offend you, Julius, but I cannot tell everything to anyone I meet on the streets. I just do not know Nicaea well enough.

JULIUS: Quite right. I was foolish to ask. Well, you keep up the good work, Erimem. You'll find a clothing stall over there, along the row and to your left. Take care now.

ERIMEM: Thank you, Julius. I shall not forget your desire to aid Arius's supporters. Perhaps we shall meet again when I will be able to speak more freely. (leaves)

JULIUS: Aye, Erimem. I'm sure of it.

ATHANASIOUS: (yawns) Oh, thank goodness. Julius! You're back sooner than I thought. How did you know to find me here?

JULIUS: The Council would have been finished for a while by this time in the afternoon. I have news

ATHANASIOUS: Yes?

JULIUS: I have travelled fast through the city and my throat is dry. Perhaps a glass of wine would ease it.

ATHANASIOUS: On the table over there. Help yourself. Now, what have you learned?

JULIUS: The girl you wanted to know about. She's a leader, all right. Word of her has spread through the city like wildfire.

ATHANASIOUS: So, she does present a threat.

JULIUS: To your popularity, certainly. Arius is gaining more supporters every moment, thanks to her efforts at the Council. The people like her. They like the fact that her battle is for truth and justice, and that she's not afraid of the bishops or the Emperor.

ATHANASIOUS: And what does she preach? Is she truly Arian?

JULIUS: She has done no preaching as yet. The people only talk of her actions at the Council, nothing more. As for her beliefs, she seems to me to be a true supporter of Arius.

ATHANASIOUS: What makes you so sure?

JULIUS: I had the good fortune to ask her in person.

ATHANASIOUS: You met with her? Are you mad?

JULIUS: Calm yourself, Athanasius. She did not suspect me. I put on a good show, pretending I was an Arian supporter myself.

ATHANASIOUS: You had better be right. In any case, it seems we must act. If most of the people support

Arius, it won't matter what Constantine thinks. He will have to listen to what his people tell him. He cannot afford to alienate them. If bishops cause him problems, he can find new ones, but there's no finding a new populace.

JULIUS: True enough. What would you have me do?

ATHANASIUS: The girl must not be allowed to continue in this. I will not see people coming to Arius because of her.

JULIUS: I see.

ATHANASIUS: Don't tell me what you will do, Julius. I do not need to know. Just know that whatever you do, it will be God's work in defence of His Holy Word and the truth of His very Being.

JULIUS: Don't worry, the matter will be taken care of.

DOCTOR: Oh, Erimem, where are you?

JULIUS: Did you see an Egyptian girl pass this way?

DOCTOR: Hello?

STALLHOLDER: Why do you want to know?

JULIUS: I met her only a few minutes ago, directed her to your very stall myself. I let her know I was a supporter of Arius and she invited me to join with her group. Unfortunately I lost her in the crowd. I was hoping you might direct me.

STALLHOLDER: Oh, you're for Arius too? Good man. Yeah, Erimem came this way. Went down into the west of the city. She had a man with her.

JULIUS: You've been a great help. (coins) For your trouble. Good day to you, sir. (leaves)

DOCTOR: Excuse me. Do you know who that was?

STALLHOLDER: It's a big city, friend. I've never seen him before in my life.

DOCTOR: Oh. Well, thanks anyway. You directed him toward the west.

STALLHOLDER: That's right. Port area, but a good few people live there.

DOCTOR: Wonderful. Thank you. Oh, er. (coins) For your trouble. Goodbye.

STALLHOLDER: Hey, I can't use this. What in blazes is a Euro anyway? Huh! Charlatan.

FAUSTA: My husband, what has happened? The whole palace is in uproar.

CONSTANTINE: Two legionaries dead, the girl escaped, and the Lord alone knows what she will do next.

FAUSTA: I'm sorry, Constantine. This day has been a hard one for you. The Council not going as you had hoped, and now this girl causing trouble.

CONSTANTINE: You have not made things easier for me, Fausta. You gave the Doctor leave to come and go as he pleases.

FAUSTA: As did you, my husband. I merely gave him a token he could show to the guards.

CONSTANTINE: Hmm. You're a clever woman, Fausta. Take care. One day you will be too clever even for your own good.

FAUSTA: Forgive me, Caesar. I meant no disrespect.

CONSTANTINE: As for the Egyptian, Erimem, I can only hope that the Doctor manages to locate her. I hate to trust him after all that I've seen, but he was right. He is the only one who stands a chance in finding her. At least I can be sure he will be back, successful or not.

FAUSTA: Yes, the servants are saying something about a girl being down in the cells. I had assumed that was Peri, but I wanted to be sure.

CONSTANTINE: Why? She's a hostage, and under lock and key. What interest can you have in her?

FAUSTA: Oh, it is just that I feel for her. She has done nothing, and for the sins of her friend she finds herself punished.

CONSTANTINE: You, Fausta, soft-hearted? This is a trait you have hidden well at court. I wonder how you've managed to keep it after so long as the wife of the Emperor.

FAUSTA: And I confess I am curious about her and her friends. Perhaps I could take her into my rooms to talk. I'm sure my bodyguard would make sure she didn't escape if she had a mind to leave us.

CONSTANTINE: What have you in mind?

FAUSTA: You never know. She might even have something to say about her Egyptian friend. If she felt comfortable and in friendly company, she might have plenty of interesting things to say.

CONSTANTINE: (laughs) So, you placate me by turning your cunning to better uses. Go then, and see what you can learn. Just make sure that she does not escape. She's our only guarantee that the Doctor will return.

FAUSTA: As you command, Caesar.

GAIUS: Here, my lady.

FAUSTA: Good. You may wait outside.

GAIUS: As you wish.

PERI: What now? Oh, Empress. What are you doing here?

FAUSTA: Peri, my dear, I'm so sorry that you have to suffer down here. Do not worry, I have spoken for you.

PERI: Yeah? You're going to get me out of here?

FAUSTA: I would like nothing better.

PERI: What?

FAUSTA: My husband, though I love him dearly, tends to over-react at times. When he sent you down here, he just wasn't thinking clearly. There was no need to lock you in this dismal place. I've spoken with him, and he's agreed that you can stay with me while the Doctor is away.

PERI: Well, thank you.

FAUSTA: Come, my dear. Gaius won't bother us. We'll take our ease in my rooms and have some wine, and you can tell me all about your Doctor friend. He sounds like such a fascinating man. This way, dear. Now, where do you come from? You have such a pale complexion.

PERI: Well, er, we've come up from Thebes most recently.

ARIUS: Erimem. Thank the Lord you're safe.

CLEMENT: As promised, Arius.

ARIUS: Forgive me for doubting you, my friend. Erimem, what happened? Where is Peri?

ERIMEM: I do not know, and I'm worried, Arius. I ran blindly from the palace. I should not have left them behind.

CLEMENT: Peri betrayed you. She led the legionaries here. Why do you worry about a woman that sold you to your enemy?

ERIMEM: I thought she had, and what the soldier said seemed to confirm it, but the Doctor and Peri have long been my friends. I fear for them left with the Emperor, especially once Constantine discovers the bodies of the legionaries.

ARIUS: What is this? You killed someone?

CLEMENT: We had no choice.

ARIUS: You have committed murder. Oh, Clement, may God have mercy upon you.

CLEMENT: They would have caught us. I would rather have blood on my hands than be locked in the Emperor's dungeon awaiting execution. I am no warrior, but these are desperate times. Sooner than us, Arius.

ERIMEM: Surely they would not have

CLEMENT: Shh. What was that?

ARIUS: The outer door.

CLEMENT: (draws blade) I'll go and see.

(Door crashes.)

JULIUS: No need for that, Clement. You don't have to go anywhere.

ERIMEM: Julius? Why are you here? You followed me.

JULIUS: Ah, Erimem. Just the person I was looking for.

CLEMENT: Why have you broken in here with a drawn sword? Are you one of the Emperor's lackeys? Has he resorted to having the homes of innocent people invaded now?

ERIMEM: I met this man in the market, Clement. He said he was a supporter of Arius. I begin to doubt that now.

JULIUS: Erimem, why am I here? You could say that I am serving the Emperor. Now you, put the dagger down and step aside. It's the girl I'm after.

CLEMENT: I've killed already today. Don't think I won't gut you like one of the fish on my stall if you try and hurt Erimem.

JULIUS: Well, you can't say I didn't try.

ERIMEM: Clement!

(Thud.)

JULIUS: Stupid. Very stupid. You're all supporters of Arius. I doubt Athanasius will mind a few more bodies on his conscience. Clement makes one, and now, girl, it's your turn.

#### [Part Four]

ERIMEM: Murderer! You shall pay for that!

ARIUS: No, Erimem! Run. An unarmed woman is no match for a sword.

JULIUS: Yes, Erimem, run. That'll make things all the more entertaining.

ERIMEM: Never. Clement was my friend. I will not leave him.

JULIUS: Then you shall join him in death. Hold still!

ARIUS: Get away from her!

JULIUS: You're strong, girl, but not strong enough.

ERIMEM: Ah!

ARIUS: No! You monster. You've killed her!

JULIUS: Which makes it your turn. Any last words?

DOCTOR: Erimem!

JULIUS: What the? Argh!

(Breaking ceramics.)

ARIUS: Now what? If you also have come to kill me, then come, make it quick. I am a priest, not a fighter.

DOCTOR: Don't be an idiot, Arius. I'm the Doctor, a friend of Erimem's. Erimem, are you still with us?

ARIUS: That man killed her.

DOCTOR: No, no, I don't think so. He caught her with the hilt of the sword, not the blade, it looks like. She'll still have a nasty bruise, though. Come on, Erimem, sit up. There you go.

ERIMEM: Oh. Doctor? How did you find me? Are you still working for the Emperor?

DOCTOR: Arius, have you any more water in the house? I hope that pitcher I misused wasn't the last of it.

ARIUS: No, Doctor. Here, take this. Do not worry about the pitcher. Rather than my life.

ERIMEM: You have still not answered my question, Doctor.

DOCTOR: No, I haven't. Sit down and drink some of that water. I'll see to this poor fellow. Clement? Getting into fighting rather than fishmongering, are you? Let's see now. Erimem, I know you'll find this hard to believe, but neither I nor Peri was responsible for those soldiers arresting you. Peri came here in all innocence, and all the soldiers had to do was follow her. Oh dear. Your friend here has quite a nasty stab wound.

ERIMEM: I heard what the soldiers said. They said she was helping them.

DOCTOR: We were both helping them in a way, but not like that. During the riot, after you got away, I was arrested and taken to the palace. The only way I could get released was by promising Constantine that I would keep my ear to the ground. Arius, can you give me a hand here? We should get him onto the bed.

ARIUS: Of course.

DOCTOR: Unfortunately, Erimem, things are never as simple as we'd like. After your outburst in the Council, things got very complicated very quickly.

ARIUS: Will he be all right?

DOCTOR: Hard to tell. It's not as bad as it could be. Doesn't seem to have hit any major organs.

ERIMEM: And the other one?

DOCTOR: He's just unconscious. Do you know who he is?

ERIMEM: He said his name was Julius, but after all the other lies he told me, I do not know if that is true.

ARIUS: He said he was serving the Emperor, and mentioned Athanasius.

DOCTOR: I certainly haven't seen him in the palace, and Constantine didn't mention sending someone else out after you.

ERIMEM: He didn't tell Peri last time he sent someone after me.

DOCTOR: Well now, I suppose he didn't. You believe me, then.

ERIMEM: I believe you. I'm sorry to have doubted, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Well, that's a step forward, at least. The big question is, though, what are you going to do next?

FAUSTA: More wine, Peri?

PERI: (slightly drunk) Oh, I'm not sure I should. Well, just a little bit then.

FAUSTA: The Doctor sounds like quite the fascinating fellow, my dear. He struck me as a clever man the moment I met him, but sadly we have not had the chance to speak at length.

PERI: I'm sure he'd love to talk with you.

FAUSTA: Really? Well then, when he returns, it must be arranged. And what of your other travelling companion, Erimem?

PERI: Oh, she's a good friend. We haven't travelled together for as long as I've travelled with the Doctor, but we're close, all the same. Or we were. Now she thinks I've betrayed her.

FAUSTA: I confess I'm confused, Peri. If you were so close, how could such a thing happen? Did you betray her?

PERI: No. Oh, I don't know. Things weren't supposed to happen like this. I didn't try to lead those soldiers to her, but in a way I suppose it was my fault.

FAUSTA: But you were arguing before that, though. It is this debate. Religion can divide even the closest of friends.

PERI: Oh, it's not that it's religion. I'm certainly not religious. I don't think Erimem is.

FAUSTA: Then what motivates her?

PERI: Justice. If she thought the other lot weren't being treated fairly, she would have supported them. It's not about Arius rather than whoever the other guy is.

FAUSTA: So, she has given her skills to Arius because she thinks him mistreated. Hmm. I think your friend has not seen the full picture.

PERI: From everything we've seen here, I think I agree with her. Arius hasn't even been allowed to speak to the Council.

FAUSTA: Because it is not up to him to defend himself, my dear. He is being judged by his superiors. They will speak both for and against him, and a decision will be reached.

PERI: But how can we know that they will give him a fair trial?

FAUSTA: What other way can things be decided? He is a priest, and so is ruled by his bishops, and those bishops by God Himself. Constantine may attend the Council, but the decisions will not be his. He only

wishes for those decisions to be made.

PERI: Oh, I didn't mean to insult the Emperor. It's just, well, it doesn't feel entirely fair for a man to be punished for speaking his mind.

FAUSTA: Which is what your friend believes.

PERI: More or less.

FAUSTA: Then she is sadly mistaken. Can she not see the damage that this Arius has already done? By continuing this fight, she is only prolonging that damage and making it worse.

PERI: I'm sure that's not what she had in

FAUSTA: And if she pushes it further, it can only end in bloodshed.

ERIMEM: I have not changed my mind, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Haven't you listened to a word I've said?

ERIMEM: I am not afraid of dying. What I hope to achieve here is much more important. Can you not see that if Constantine resorts to sending assassins after me, then he knows I present a threat to him.

DOCTOR: I'm by no means convinced it was Constantine who sent that man. And even if it was, surely you're not trying to threaten him. I thought you were trying to get Arius a fair hearing, not leading a revolt.

ERIMEM: He is a tyrant who is afraid to listen to his people. He does not even know how many of those people support Arius. When I show him, he will have no choice but to listen.

DOCTOR: Listen or else, is that what you're trying to say to him? You were a leader once yourself, Erimem. Remember what it was like. If you threaten him, Constantine will have to answer in kind. You'll have a massacre on your hands. You don't have to do this. We can just walk away from it now.

ARIUS: No, you cannot walk away from it.

DOCTOR: Arius, please.

ARIUS: No, Doctor. Listen to me. You cannot walk away from this. This battle between myself and Athanasius, it is part of everyone's life.

DOCTOR: That doesn't mean people should die for a set of abstract truths.

ARIUS: There is no person in the entire Empire who is not touched by the truths we debate. If you choose not to act, you have still made a choice, and there will be consequences. You cannot be uninvolved.

DOCTOR: Do you want more injuries like Clements' on your hands? More deaths like those two legionaries? That's what will happen if you go through with this.

ARIUS: I do not look for deaths, but I think now that they are inevitable. Good men will suffer whatever happens. If I must suffer, then I will do so knowing that I have been true to my faith. I will not have betrayed my God.

DOCTOR: Erimem?

ERIMEM: And I will not betray my belief either. I must do this. I owe it to the people who have already gathered. We must move soon, or Constantine may move against us again. We will march tonight.

CONSTANTINE: Yes, Gaius, what is it?

GAIUS: I'm sorry to disturb you, Caesar, but Athanasius asks if he might speak with you.

CONSTANTINE: (sigh) Very well. Bring him in.

ATHANASIUS: Hail, Caesar.

CONSTANTINE: What is it, clerk? What message do you bring from the bishop?

ATHANASIUS: The bishop did not send me, my Emperor. I wanted to speak with you, to warn you of a new development.

CONSTANTINE: Meaning?

ATHANASIUS: A few hours ago, I sent a man in my service out to take care of a few errands. He is well overdue to return. I fear the worst for him.

CONSTANTINE: Your servant being a little late is hardly my concern. Dock his pay if you must. Why have you wasted my time with this?

ATHANASIUS: Under normal circumstances, Caesar, I would never bring such a small thing to your attention, but you know there have been deaths recently, related to the rift in the Church. I fear that something may have befallen him because he is my servant.

CONSTANTINE: This is not my problem, Athanasius. My legionaries keep the peace on the streets. If they find your servant, then they find him.

ATHANASIUS: But that isn't all. I hate to involve myself in the spreading of rumours, but there has been talk of Arius's supporters rising up. Julius's disappearance may be the beginning of a much bigger problem.

CONSTANTINE: What do you mean, a rising up? What is this foolishness?

ATHANASIUS: I hardly dare to suggest, Caesar. I would never have believed that even the followers of that heretic Arius would sink so low. But still I could not risk not telling you what I have heard.

CONSTANTINE: Thank you for this information, Athanasius. Leave me now. If these rumours are true, there is much to be done.

ATHANASIUS: Of course, Caesar. My thanks for allowing me into your Imperial presence.

CONSTANTINE: Centurion! Show the clerk out.

GAIUS: At once, Caesar.

ATHANASIUS: Did you mark what was said in there, Centurion?

GAIUS: Yes, sir. Most disturbing.

ATHANASIUS: Time may be short. I think the Commander of the army stationed here should be warned. Would you know where he is?

GAIUS: Of course.

ATHANASIUS: Lead me to him, then, and find another to take your post. We have no time to lose.

ARIUS: It seems the call has been answered.

ERIMEM: This is amazing. They have all come here for you, Arius.

ARIUS: No, not for me. They have gathered here to bear witness to their faith. And they have come at your bidding, Erimem. They have heard stories of your bravery. They gather because you asked them to.

ERIMEM: Will you come with us?

ARIUS: I will. Tempers will run high, I think, and I shall be here to calm those tempted to violence. This must be peaceful.

CLEMENT: I will come too.

ARIUS: Don't be foolish, Clement. You must return to your bed at once.

CLEMENT: No. I'm sorry, Arius, but I have to see this through. I want to see the Emperor's face when he recognises the strength of belief among his people and realises his mistake. He will not underestimate us again.

ERIMEM: That so many people are here now is due to Clement as much as to anyone. It is only right he should accompany us if he wishes. He's fit enough to walk, at least, although we must go slowly.

ARIUS: Then I am overruled. Just do not exhaust yourself, my friend.

CLEMENT: If we are to go, we should go now. News of this gathering will reach the Emperor soon.

ERIMEM: Then we go. People of Nicaea. Your faith is strong. Tonight we go to show that strength to the Emperor himself.

(Cheers.)

ERIMEM: Come with me to the Imperial palace.

(More cheers and chants of Arius, Arius.)

CONSTANTINE: Doctor, you took your time. What news?

DOCTOR: Is Peri safe?

CONSTANTINE: Of course. I shall have her brought here immediately. Gaius, go and fetch the girl.

GAIUS: Yes, Caesar.

CONSTANTINE: So?

DOCTOR: I found Erimem, but she is not in hiding any more. She will lead a group of people to the palace tonight to demonstrate how many of your Nicaean subjects support Arius.

CONSTANTINE: Athanasius was right. I will not have this, Doctor. It is the Council that will solve this issue, not the mob.

DOCTOR: Of course not, but that isn't what they want. Those people are afraid you don't care what they think. This gathering isn't an attack, it's a demonstration of support for Arius. They don't want violence.

CONSTANTINE: In my experience, Doctor, mobs and violence are inseparable.

PERI: Doctor!

CONSTANTINE: You see, Doctor? Your friend was safe in the hands of my wife.

FAUSTA: Doctor.

PERI: Did you find Erimem?

DOCTOR: Yes. She's all right for the moment, but she is about to put herself into terrible danger.

PERI: Oh no, what now.

DOCTOR: She's leading a march, a demonstration. I couldn't stop her. But I'm certain we can avoid bloodshed.

FAUSTA: What do you suggest?

DOCTOR: Caesar, if you call your soldiers out to face the crowd, violence is inevitable. There will be a massacre.

CONSTANTINE: If it's that or watch as rioters the city...

DOCTOR: That's not the choice. Don't call out the army. Meet the crowd yourself. You are a great speaker, Constantine. Show them that you want the best for the Church.

CONSTANTINE: You have great faith in my abilities as orator, Doctor.

DOCTOR: With good reason. You're a Christian like them. Appeal to them, let them know you're not the tyrant they think you are.

CONSTANTINE: You ask a lot. I would be putting myself in danger.

PERI: If Erimem knew there would be no soldiers to meet her, she could make sure that nothing happens. Let me go to her. I'll tell her what is happening. I only hope she'll believe me.

DOCTOR: Don't worry. I don't think she believes you're a traitor any more. This news should help convince her.

CONSTANTINE: But how do I know you won't turn that information against me?

FAUSTA: I have spoken with her, Caesar. I do not believe she will turn traitor as soon as she has left the palace.

DOCTOR: It all comes down to faith, Constantine.

CONSTANTINE: Go then. We have no more time to spare arguing. I am putting my trust in you, Peri. You hold hundreds of lives in your hands. Do not play me false.

CROWD: Arius! Arius! etc.

ERIMEM: Are you all right, Clement?

CLEMENT: Still alive, Erimem.

ERIMEM: Tell me if we go too fast. We shall slow the pace for you.

ARIUS: Erimem, someone is coming.

ERIMEM: Peri? Peri!

PERI: Thank goodness I've found you. Erimem, you don't still think I betrayed you, do you? I swear to you I

ERIMEM: It is all right, Peri. I believe you. Before, when I thought everyone I loved had turned against me, I was not able to see the truth.

PERI: I was so afraid I'd lost you.

ERIMEM: You did, for a little while. But not any more. We may disagree, but that cannot destroy the bonds that have held us together through so much.

PERI: Erimem, I'm glad to have you back.

ERIMEM: But why are you here? Do you plan to march with us? Could it be that you have changed your mind after all?

PERI: Not quite. I still disagree with what you're doing, but you're my friend, Erimem, and I couldn't let you face something like this alone.

ERIMEM: Peri.

PERI: And I've got a message for you from the Doctor. Constantine knows you're coming.

ARIUS: What?

PERI: But the Doctor's persuaded him not to call out his army. He doesn't want violence either.

ERIMEM: That is easy for him to say.

PERI: I'm sure he's telling the truth this time. He's going to meet you. It's a big step for him. He'll be putting himself in danger.

ERIMEM: He plans to meet us? I did not expect such a thing from Constantine. This will be welcome news if it is true, but we must be ready for it to be false. It is not that I distrust you, Peri, but I have no reason to trust the Emperor's word.

PERI: But you must control these people.

ARIUS: It was never our intention for there to be bloodshed tonight. Whether or not the Emperor calls out his legionaries, we will not resort to violence.

PERI: I hope these people feel as strongly about it as you do.

ARIUS: So they have assured me.

PERI: Then I guess that will have to do. Let's hope everyone sticks to their side of the bargain.

CROWD: Arius! Arius!

ARIUS: There it is. The Imperial palace.

ERIMEM: There's no one there. The Emperor kept his word

PERI: You see, Erimem?

CLEMENT: Is he mocking us? Aren't we worth his attention?

ARIUS: Peace, Clement. We are not here for confrontation.

PERI: I knew he would keep to it. Fausta was right. He's just misunderstood.

ARIUS: Look, Constantine is coming out onto the balcony. He has come to see us. Hold your heads high, brethren. Show him our pride in our belief. Keep going until we are as close as we can get. Now, halt.

ERIMEM: See the followers of Arius, Constantine. See how they show themselves to you.  
(Trumpets sound.)

ARIUS: Look.

PERI: Oh no!

CLEMENT: I was right. That grasping tyrant has no honour! He's sent his army anyway.

ERIMEM: This changes nothing. No one move. We shall stand our ground and show our courage.

PERI: I thought. I was sure he would keep his word.

GAIUS: Century, draw swords.

MAN: Run!

ERIMEM: Stand your ground!

CLEMENT: Stand still and be slaughtered like cattle? Never. If I must die today, I'll die like a true martyr.



ERIMEM: Stop, Clement. What are you doing?

CLEMENT: I'm going to meet them. Let me go.

ERIMEM: They may only be here to threaten us. If you charge them, they will certainly kill you. Stay here!

CLEMENT: Let me go! Erimem, release me.

ERIMEM: No, I will not let you throw your life away. We did not come here to be martyred.

CLEMENT: What better way than this to prove the strength of my belief?

ERIMEM: It is not worth your life. Arius does not need martyrs to further his cause. If we are to die now, we will not have made the first move. Let the blood be on Constantine's hands.

DOCTOR: Constantine, what is this?

CONSTANTINE: I did not command this, Doctor. If that idiot Gaius took matters into his own hands...

FAUSTA: You must stop them now.

CONSTANTINE: Legionaries, halt! Sheath your weapons. Direct them, Gaius. Your Emperor commands you.

GAIUS: But Caesar...

CONSTANTINE: Now!

GAIUS: As Caesar commands. Sheath swords!

DOCTOR: Talk to them, Constantine. You've got their attention, use it.

CONSTANTINE: My people, brethren in Christ, hear me. I know why you're here tonight. You wish to show your support for a man you think I have treated unfairly. You think me a tyrant who cares nothing for the will of his people, but only of what he desires. You are wrong. It is true that I desire peace within the Church, but that is not a selfish wish. It is what the Church needs. She cannot be always fighting, ripped apart by squabbles from within. She must be strong, unified, one Church as the Lord has told us. It is the Council which will judge Arius, not I. He will be judged by the bishops, and I will hold to their decision.

ARIUS: You sit on the Council, Constantine. You govern the bishops.

CLEMENT: Your soldiers stand outside the doors.

CONSTANTINE: I am your Emperor. I keep the peace while the debates go on. Truly, I want a swift resolution to the internal strife of the Church, but I push the Council neither to one side nor to the other. I hope the bishops have seen you here tonight, brethren. I hope that your faith and dedication will sway their decisions. I pray for all of us, that this conflict will over soon, and the Church may be whole once again. I have heard your voices. May your leaders hear them as I have done.

DOCTOR: Very nice, Constantine. Very nice.

PERI: Hail Caesar! Come on, you idiots. Hail Caesar.

CROWD: Hail Caesar. Hail Caesar.

CONSTANTINE: Thank you, Doctor.

ARIUS: The Council may still choose to drive me from the Church, but we won a victory here tonight. Constantine heard us, no one was hurt, and the Emperor recognised our witness.

CLEMENT: What will you do now, Erimem?

ERIMEM: I'm not sure, Clement. I do not think there is any more I can do for you, Arius.

ARIUS: You have done more than enough for us already. Without you we would never have had an audience with the Emperor. Come, Clement. Wherever you go in the future, Erimem, go with God. Blessings be upon you.

ERIMEM: Farewell.

DOCTOR: Congratulations.

ERIMEM: How long have you two been standing there?

PERI: Not long. Only long enough to catch your goodbyes.

DOCTOR: So, Erimem, after all that, are you satisfied?

ERIMEM: Honestly? No. Constantine may have pleased the crowd, but he was simply moving the guilt of injustice onto different shoulders. If he truly wished to, he could make sure Arius received a fair hearing.

DOCTOR: While instead he chooses to restrict himself and to let the bishops do as they want, within reason. If he stepped in and controlled everything, that would make him a tyrant. Now the Church is as it wants to be.

ERIMEM: I kept thinking that if it were me in Constantine's place I could do so much better. I look for his failings, yet I forgot there is more to being a leader than ideals.

DOCTOR: You're not wrong to want justice and truth, Erimem. Not all ideals are bad.

ERIMEM: They are important, truly, but if keeping to those ideals costs lives and suffering, can it be worth it? I still think so, but I can understand Constantine better now. He wishes for peace, and if he must make a sacrifice to achieve it, then he will do so. A tyrant would have used his soldiers tonight, not restrained them. I misjudged him.

DOCTOR: He is a good man, Erimem.

ERIMEM: Doctor, Peri, I owe you an apology. I'm sorry. Can you ever forgive me?

PERI: Come on. We should leave here before Constantine comes to find you. You're still a criminal as far as he's concerned. Let's get back to the Tardis.

(Tardis door opens, footsteps.)

DOCTOR: Ah, here we are.

ERIMEM: So, have I done damage to the timeline?

(Tardis door closes.)

DOCTOR: It seems... not. No, history has bounced back into position, no harm done.

ERIMEM: After all that, and nothing was even changed? I was a fool to try.

PERI: At least you acted honestly. You meant well.

ERIMEM: What happens, Doctor? The Council judges against Arius, does it not? And what then?

DOCTOR: Then he is exiled.

PERI: He doesn't deserve that.

DOCTOR: Probably not. He and his doctrine were anathematised and Athanasius's ideas of the nature of Christ were adopted. But that wasn't the end of it. Even though his doctrine was excluded from the Church for ever, a few years later Constantine changed his mind about Arius himself. He realised Athanasius was more trouble than he was worth and exiled him instead. Arius got invited back into the Empire.

PERI: Constantine does a U-turn? Is he allowed to do that?

ERIMEM: It seems so, Peri. At least in the end Constantine recognised Arius's worth. I'm glad. It must have cost him to change his mind so obviously before his people.

PERI: Who'd be a leader, huh?

ERIMEM: I think I have had enough of leading to last me a long time.

PERI: What about Fausta, Doctor? While you were off hunting for Erimem she looked after me, and spoke up for me with Constantine. So what happens to her? Do she and Constantine live happily ever after?

DOCTOR: Not quite. Constantine was always suspicious of Fausta's family. Fausta's brother was killed thirteen years before Council in a battle against Constantine, and in a year's time, Constantine will have Fausta steamed to death in her own bathroom.

PERI: Why would he do a thing like that?

DOCTOR: Constantine thought she conspired against his son. She probably did. I can't say I like it, but that's how things are done in this time.

PERI: How awful!

ERIMEM: I have heard of worse deaths. In Egypt we might have

PERI: Let's not talk about that now, okay? Doctor, where next?

DOCTOR: Somewhere nice and restful, I think. Somewhere we can't do any harm.

PERI: Fat chance. We'll be lost and landed on some war-ravaged planet before we know what's hit us.

DOCTOR: Don't mock, Peri. The Tardis and I work in perfect harmony. Most of the time.

ERIMEM: Can I have one last look, Doctor?

(Scanner.)

DOCTOR: There. It's a beautiful city, even at night.

ERIMEM: (sigh) All right, Doctor. I'm ready.

ARIUS: Are you sure she came this way, Clement?

CLEMENT: Surely, Arius.

ARIUS: I just have one last thing to ask her.

CLEMENT: Down that alley. I think I saw them go into that blue box thing.

ARIUS: Erimem? Erimem, are you there?

(The Tardis dematerialises.)

CLEMENT: By all that's holy. Was she, was she an angel?

ARIUS: May the Lord forgive me. Why did I not see it? Your messenger sent to help us in our darkest hour. What else could she be?